

REMARKS

In response to the Official Action mailed February 13, 2005, Applicants amend their application and respectfully request reconsideration. In this Amendment, no claims are added or canceled so that claims 1-39 remain at issue. Claims 1, 8, 12, 14, 21, 25, 27, 34, and 38 are amended. No new matter has been added.

I. 35 U.S.C. § 102 Anticipation Rejection of Claims

The Examiner rejected claims 1-39 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) based upon a public use or sale of the invention by *Microsoft Excel 2000* (hereinafter “*Excel 2000*”) copyrighted by the Microsoft Corporation in 1999. That rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants respectfully submit that *Excel 2000* fails to teach every limitation of claim 1. For example, *Excel 2000* fails to teach “determining automatically by a computer whether a reference to said second cell conforms to a predetermined syntax for entry into a formula in said first cell based on operators and operands in the formula; and when it is determined that the reference to said second cell does not conform to the predetermined syntax, automatically terminating forumla editing by the computer.” The Examiner notes in the Response to Arguments that *Excel 2000* can restrict cells. However, these data validation restrictions are made based on user-defined lists or formulas. *Excel 2000* does not determine conformation to a predetermined syntax based on operators and operands in the formula itself. Moreover, *Excel 2000* does not automatically terminate formula editing when such a determination is made. Thus, *Excel 2000* does not anticipate claim 1.

Claims 8, 12, 14, 21, 25, 27, 34, and 38 recite limitations similar to those of claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that *Excel 2000* does not teach all the limitations of

independent claims 1, 8, 12, 14, 21, 25, 27, 34, and 38, and respectfully requests that the rejection to these claims be withdrawn.

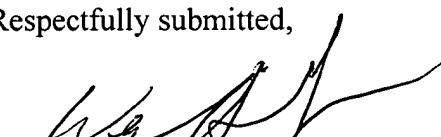
Claims 2-7 depend from claim 1. Claims 9-11 depend from claim 8. Claim 13 depends from claim 12. Claims 15-20 depend from base claim 14. Claims 22-24 depend from base claim 21. Claim 26 depends from base claim 25. Claims 28-33 depend from base claim 27. Claims 35-37 depend from base claim 34. Claim 39 depends from base claim 38. Thus, each dependent claim should be deemed allowable for at least the same reasons as the base claim from which it depends.

II. Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants submit that all claims are allowable over the cited prior art, and respectfully requests early and favorable notification to that effect.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: May 5, 2006

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